

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**  
**TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN**



**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**For Immediate Release**  
**September 28, 2005**

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**Government Reform to Consider**  
**Property Bills, Military Postage Legislation**

**What: GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**

**When: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2005 at 1:00 P.M.**

**Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING**

**Background:**

The Government Reform Committee will hold a business meeting to mark up the following:

**H. Res. 15**, supporting the goals and ideals of National Campus Safety Awareness Month.

**H. Res. 276**, supporting the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

**H. Res. 389**, supporting the goals and ideals of the Year of the Museum.

**H.R. 3549**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 210 West 3rd Avenue in Warren, Pennsylvania, as the "William F. Clinger, Jr. Post Office Building."

**H.R. 3830**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 130 East Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda, Florida, as the "U.S. Cleveland Post Office Building."

**H.R. 3853**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 208 South Main Street in Parkdale, Arkansas, as the "Willie Vaughn Post Office."

### **H.R. 923, “Mailing Support to Troops Act of 2005”**

H.R. 923 would establish a program to provide for free postage on certain mail items being sent to members of the armed forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as those hospitalized due to disease or injury received as a result of service in Iraq or Afghanistan. Under an amendment in the nature of a substitute that will be offered at the business meeting, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Postal Service, is required to establish a one-year program under which qualified members of the armed forces receive a monthly voucher that can be redeemed to pay the postal expenses of sending one letter or parcel to the service member. The service member can then send these vouchers to anyone they choose, such as family members or loved ones. H.R. 923, as amended, will allow our fighting men and women to receive more mail from their families and loved ones back home – letters, videotapes, or care packages – while lessening the financial burden on those family members or loved ones.

### **H.R. 1317, “Federal Employee Protection of Disclosures Act”**

H.R. 1317 would enhance whistleblower protections for federal employees. The legislation would include as a protected disclosure by a Federal employee any lawful disclosure an employee or applicant reasonably believes is credible evidence of waste, abuse, or gross mismanagement, without restriction as to time, place, form, motive, context, or prior disclosure. The legislation would also require a GAO study on security clearances revocations taking effect after 1996 with respect to personnel who filed claims in connection with such security clearance revocations.

### **H.R. 3134, “Federal Real Property Disposal Pilot Program and Management Improvement Act of 2005”**

H.R. 3134 would authorize the creation of a Federal Real Property Disposal Pilot Program to permit the expedited disposal of excess property, surplus property, or underperforming real property in accordance with the provisions in the legislation. This legislation is intended to improve the management of federal real property, a key component of the President’s management agenda.

The Federal government’s real estate portfolio has over 3.2 billion square feet in nearly 525,000 buildings valued at over \$328 billion. Despite the hundreds of millions of dollars spent each year to maintain these properties, many are in disrepair, lack updated technological infrastructure, pose health and safety threats, and no longer meet the Federal government’s mission needs, earning federal property management a place on GAO’s High Risk Series. For example, of the 8,000 buildings managed by the General Services Administration (GSA), more than half are over 50 years old and are in deteriorating condition requiring an estimated \$5.7 billion in repairs. As a result, agencies are often forced to vacate properties and lease costly space from the private sector.

H.R. 3134 would begin to address these challenges by authorizing the government to dispose of costly real properties it no longer needs, and codifying provisions from President Bush's E.O. 13327, such as the inventory database, the Federal Real Property Council, and the Senior Real Property Officers. The legislation would create a 5-year pilot program to allow for the expedited disposal of federal excess, surplus, or under-performing real properties outside of the bureaucratic conveyance process. Under the pilot, the Director of OMB would select properties to participate in the program, provided the government sold the property at or above fair market value, and provided that the sale would generate proceeds for the government. As an incentive to participate, the affected agency is permitted to retain a portion of those proceeds.

### **H.R. 3699, "Federal and District of Columbia Government Real Property Act of 2005"**

H.R. 3699 would authorize the exchange of certain land parcels between the federal government and the District of Columbia. This proposal was submitted to Congress by the Administration with the strong support of the District. Under this legislation, federal properties in D.C. that provide little value to the federal government or are an unnecessary maintenance burden would be transferred to the District, thereby freeing federal tax dollars to be spent in more productive areas. The bill applies to 30 properties owned by the District of Columbia, the Interior Department's National Parks Service or the General Services Administration. Several of these properties are already under administrative control of the District.

Transferring these properties would allow both Interior and the GSA to better manage their properties and to preserve and protect public lands for future generations. The District gains the ability to build neighborhoods, develop more parks, enhance economic revitalization, and increase the local tax base. The transferred property would allow the District to further develop the lands to increase the city's tax base and decrease its financial dependence on the federal government.

For more detailed information about the specific properties covered in the legislation, visit <http://www.nps.gov/ncro/dclandslegislation/>.

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